

Long-Term Outcomes of Woodbury County, Iowa's
Drug Court Program

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ABSTRACT: Fifteen graduates of the Woodbury County Drug Court Program were randomly selected and interviewed during 2005. The interviews focused upon the client's thoughts about the overall drug court process as well as their quality of life post-graduation. The questions focused upon the following: family involvement, employment status, educational advancement, and living a sober lifestyle. A majority of graduates thought drug court program was instrumental in helping them obtain and maintain recovery. While many of them briefly returned to their drug-abusing lifestyle immediately after graduation, they also believed the program "planted a seed" that hastened a quick return to a recovery lifestyle.

Introduction

Started in Dade County, Florida, drug courts were created to stem the tide of cocaine and its derivatives that entered the country during the 1980s. Communities experienced increased drug-related arrests and prison populations. Escalating incarceration costs, along with decreased state support, forced local communities to seek alternatives (Belenko, 1998a and 1998b; Wilhelm and Turner, 2002). Communities feared former prisoners would recommit drug-related crimes unless treatment was available prior to release (Hughes and Wilson, 2003). As the problem spread throughout the United States, communities adopted the Dade County Drug Court model to reduce drug- and alcohol-related crime and arrests (Banks and Gottfredson, 2004; Belenko, 1998a and 1998b; ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse, 1998; Shanahan, M., Lancsar, Emily, et. al, 2004; U.S. Department of Justice, 1997).

Drug court is a form of court-coercion that provides drug and alcohol treatment. They combine legally imposed sanctions with prosecution, probation and judicial monitoring, graduated sanctions, drug testing, and drug-treatment services. Persons who participate in the program are monitored by their defense lawyers as well as a court administrator, probation officer, treatment provider, and a judge. Throughout their participation in the program, clients are expected to complete one's General Educational Development (GED) and/or begin college or technical training, obtain stable employment, as well as meet current financial and social obligations (U.S. Department of Justice, 2002).

Several scholarly journals and government agencies have published articles or monographs on the efficacy of drug court programs on the whole or in part; however, they are primarily limited to individual programs. They lack generalizability due to inconsistent statistical analyses and research protocol. These situations prevent an effective national, regional, or statewide evaluation based upon costs or recidivism. There are even fewer studies that examine the long-term success of the client post graduation (Breckinridge, et. al, 2000; Gottfredson, Kearley, et. al, 2005; Peters and Murrin, 2000; Shanahan, M., Lancsar, E., et. al, 2004; Spohn, et al. 2001; Stanford and Arrigo, 2005; U.S. Department of Justice, 2002; U.S. Government Accounting Office, 2005;). The purpose of this paper is to provide insight into the post-graduation lifestyle of former Drug Court clients. The subjects are former participants of the community-based Woodbury County, Iowa's program.

Based in Sioux City, Iowa, the program began in the late 1990s. Like all other American communities that created a drug court program, a group of concerned citizens were concerned about increasing substance abuse rates, incarceration rates, court dockets, and their subsequent financial burdens on the community. The community group worked with law enforcement and court personnel to implement a community-based drug court program whereby the clients would report to a community panel rather than a judge. The community-based model was the first one implemented in the United States and has proven to have one of the lower recidivism rates in the country. (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

Description of the Woodbury County Community-Based Drug Court Program

Theoretical Foundations

The Woodbury County Drug Court Program operates under two theories: the theory of therapeutic jurisprudence and social bonds theory. Theoretical jurisprudence (TJ) is a legal theory that finds its roots in several disciplines: law, psychology, psychiatry, criminology, criminal justice, public health, and philosophy (Wexler, 1996). Focusing primarily upon offender rehabilitation, TJ examines options that impact a client's behavior and well-being. Ultimately, it is designed to support a more pro-social and mainstream lifestyle through a multidisciplinary approach that is within legal boundaries. Legal representatives – prosecutors, defense lawyers, judges, probation officers, treatment providers – act as legal and behavioral change agents. If these legal actions are entrenched within the system, therapeutic jurisprudence can incorporate change through cognitive dissonance, self-efficacy, and decisional balance. A client's participation in a structured environment, like a drug court setting, encourages verbal processing to become engrained into the client's psyche through environmental and behavioral actions. In essence, TJ is an "ethic of care" (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

As defined within that ethic of care lays social bonds theory. It focuses upon four psychological and sociological actions that promote socialization and conformity, particularly among juveniles: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. The stronger the bonds between these feelings, the less likely a person will be delinquent. As in the case of juveniles, the more attached they are to their parents, school, and community, the less likely they are to commit crimes and jeopardize those relationships. The stronger their commitment to and involvement in pro-social activities and commonly held morals and ethics, the less likely a juvenile will commit crime. Lastly, the belief component of a society's value system allows an offender to accept society's value system (Adler, Mueller, and Laufer, 2004; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). Similar situations exist for adults.

The community court system, like the Woodbury County Drug Court Program, allow its clients, both juvenile and adult, to form attachments with their panel members and probation officers. The panel court members encourage the client to establish permanent employment or obtain higher educational goals thereby encouraging pro-social behaviors and accepting social morals, beliefs, and values. The panel members assist the person in transitioning from his or her subcultural lifestyle to one within mainstream society. While these theories provide a foundation upon which a community-based drug court operates, it could not exist without its legislative or financial support. Through federal grant funding and the Iowa State Legislature, Woodbury County created the community-based system.

Legislative and Bureaucratic Support

The Iowa State Assembly passed the *Model Drug Offender Accountability and Treatment Act* in 1999 to assist local communities creating a drug court program within their communities (Iowa HSB 221, 1999). HSB 221 and Chapter 80E of Iowa State Law created the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy (GODCP). The agency manages and coordinates statewide drug court programs through several state and local agencies like the state Department of Corrections, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Safety, and state judicial districts. The Woodbury County program involves not only these state organizations but also local agencies and service providers thereby mirroring the statewide organizational involvement.

The U.S. Department of Justice provided \$400K over the first four years of the project. In 2004, the statewide program was primarily funded by the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Grant Program (hereby referred to as the Byrne Grant). The Byrne Grant is a competitive, federal block grant program that provides state and local governments funds to "reduce crime and improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, reduce the availability and demand for illegal drugs, increase offender accountability and improve offender habilitation, and enhance youth and family wellness" (Prouty, 2002, para. 1). It is a matching grant, requiring the state to contribute to 25 percent of its overall expenditures; furthermore, the Byrne Grant has a five-year lifespan thereby requiring the State of Iowa to assume all financial responsibilities at the beginning of the sixth year of the program. While the Iowa State Legislature and Governor's Office continue to support the program, it decreased its funding from \$5.6 million in 2004 to \$3.2 million in 2005, a total of \$2.4 million or 42 percent (G.P. Niles, personal communication, February 28, 2005; Prouty, 2002, para. 1). Even with these cutbacks, the drug court program upholds its mission statement and goals.

Mission Statement and Organizational Goals

The court's mission statement is "to demonstrate an innovative, comprehensive, and integrated approach to substance abuse treatment among offending juveniles and adults by coupling the coercive power of the court with substance abuse services" (Gendreau and Andrews, 2001; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005). The organization's goals include:

- Increasing the effectiveness of substance abuse treatment among offenders and:
 - Reducing substance abuse in Woodbury County;
 - Decreasing substance abuse related crimes;
 - Curtailing in detention facilities, state training schools, and residential treatment placements; and
 - Increasing functioning in other areas of the justice system.
- Expediting case processes and thereby:
 - Reduce the duration of incarceration;
 - Alleviate court docket crowding; and
 - Increase system effectiveness (Gendreau and Andrews, 2001, p. 6; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005, p.24)

The mission statement and operational goals reflect the spirit of legal and theoretical underpinnings of any drug court program while allowing each them to implement a program that is acceptable to all persons and organizations involved.

Organizational Structure of the Community Panel System

According to Gary Niles, Chief Judicial Court Officer and Drug Court Coordinator for the Third Judicial District of the State of Iowa, the Woodbury County Drug Court Program was implemented to meet the needs brought to state leaders by county residents and local officials.

Under Niles' direction, the community group asked if the judges could allocate one to two hours weekly toward the program. The Third Judicial District would undertake most of the administrative requirements and would seek advertise for community members to volunteer on as community drug court panel judges. This would free the judges' dockets to hear more pressing cases while encouraging the implementation of the community panel program. Everyone agreed and the program began

The group proposed that three to four community members would work with each client brought to them. While they have varied professional backgrounds, ranging from a tattoo artist to local business owners and from physicians to a motorcycle mechanic, most of them have extensive training in substance abuse treatment or are involved with the local recovering community. The panel spends a minimum of 15 minutes each month with the client while the assigned probation officer would closely supervise each participant. The panel is trained by the judges and judicial court staff as to their rights and privileges as a community court judge. They are expected to attend quarterly training sessions on related topics. Within three days of the announcement, over 85 people applied for one of the 24 openings. The panel members were chosen by the initial group of concerned citizens and the program began mid-1999 (G. P. Niles, Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). There are currently 10 panels with three to four persons serving in each group. Three panels meet the first and third weeks of each month while two panels convene the alternating weeks. Due to current vacancies or absences, 10 community members attend each week and sit on their assigned panels.

Criteria for Acceptance into Drug Court

The requirements for the client to enter the program are: 1) have a demonstrated history of physical abuse and/or psychological dependence of a mood-altering substance; 2) committed non-violent crimes that primarily resulted from one's addiction; and 3) live within and committed crime within Woodbury County area. Most referrals to drug court programs occur at the pre-plea phase and it is used to encourage the offender to participate in the program rather than enter the traditional court and incarceration system. However, a person's sentence, fines, and community service hours are not reduced as an incentive to participate in the program. This is one factor that separates the Woodbury County Drug Court Program from others: It is a post-plea referral system. Potential clients are required to have a demonstrated problem with alcohol and drugs and they cannot use Drug Court to plea-bargain with the District Attorney's Office. The client spends the same amount of time in jail as any other person who commits a similar crime but does not qualify or cannot enter the drug court program.

In all cases, the client has committed a nonviolent, alcohol- or drug-related crime. It is believed to have a problem by his/her probation officer, the client is asked to take the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI). The psychological screening tool measures a person's conscious and subconscious attempts to conceal an alcohol or drug problem. While there are adult and adolescent versions of SASSI, the test's accuracy is unaffected by gender, ethnicity, occupational status, marital status, age, disability, or years of formal education (Lazowski, et

al, 1998; SASSI Institute, 2005). Other psychological tests may be administered to corroborate the SASSI findings; however, SASSI is the primary tool used to diagnose the potential participant's alcoholism and/or drug addiction. Therefore, a non-violent offender who is at moderate-to-high risk of continued substance abuse is more likely to be assigned to the Drug Court Program.

If the client receives a score that establishes the likelihood of an underlying substance abuse issue, the client is referred to the Drug Court Program. An interview with a Drug Court probation officer is scheduled along with a local treatment provider. Once the required level of psychological support is determined, the probation officer contacts the Woodbury County Attorney's Office and all other relevant organizations. The potential client signs a contract committing him- or herself to the program and they are assigned to a panel. At which point, the client reports to the same three- to four-member panel, called a "home panel", throughout their participation in the program. This period usually lasts, on average, one year to 18 months. Often times, a client is randomly placed due to vacancies within a panel. However, the client and probation officer know each other well by this juncture of the relationship; as a result, the client may be matched by the probation officer with a panel that will best provide the direction he or she needs to help them remain drug- and alcohol-free and become a contributing member of mainstream society (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

Once the theoretical and legal foundation is established, the client will be eligible for graduation when the following conditions are met: 1) obtaining and/or maintaining steady employment or remain in school/university; 2) completing all community service requirements; 3) paying all fines and court costs; 4) providing proof of attendance to his/her treatment provider and 12-step programs; 5) maintaining continuous contact with probation officer; 6) providing evidence of continuous sobriety at the point of graduation via regular and/or periodic urinalysis (Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

These six overarching goals are met, the client must successfully complete four separate phases. During Phase I, the panel's primary goal is client stabilization. They establish the four tenets of social bonds theory. This is usually accomplished within the first two months of the program. They are expected to "obtain a substance abuse evaluation and comply with the [drug court] recommendations" and "terminate all relationships with using associates and provide the Drug Court with an associates list" (Third Judicial District, 1999, pg 1). Clients accepted into Phase II are expected to earnestly seek stable employment and/or continue educational requirements as well as obtain more meaningful relationships. They are required to follow their treatment plan which includes attending 12-

step meetings; as a result, they are expected to have a 12-step sponsor and report this to the panel. For anonymity reasons, the client is not required to report the full name of their sponsor to the panel members. During the third phase, the clients are expected to maintain their new lifestyle. This usually lasts about three to six months. The clients are accountable for their behaviors at each of the three levels. The panel may impose sanctions or incentives that are proportional to the client's actions. Sanctions include, but are not limited to the following: verbal admonishment, increased number of community service hours, writing assignments, increased number of drug court appearances, or placed in detention or jail until the client can see a judge within the next 24- to 48-hours. Over-achieving clients are rewarded with incentives like verbal praise, fine or community service hour reduction, and early promotion to the next phase. At the fourth, and final, phase the client is prepared for graduation as the need for a more structured environment is not deemed necessary and most, if not all, of their legal obligations have been met (Third Judicial District, 1999, pg 1). The client does not graduate unless all persons involved with the client agree to his or her graduation; at which point, the client receives a certificate of completion. Gifts and dessert may be shared among the panel members, the client, the probation officer, and any other persons who are present at that time (G. P. Niles, Personal Communication, February 28, 2005; Vick and Lamb-Keating, 2005).

While each client is encouraged to visit with their panel members each month, there are no records of any client returning beyond graduation. There are panel members who are involved with 12-step programs and see their former clients in meetings. Because anonymity is a cornerstone of these programs, neither the person nor their comments would be publicly discussed. This can be considered a shortfall within the study; those limitations will be discussed in the next section on methodology.

Methodology

This research provides a glimpse into the lifestyle of former graduates. Each graduate was contacted by letter, informing them of the project and its attempts to maintain confidentiality. (See Appendix C) The survey focused specifically upon their opinions about the program and their lives after drug court. They were told the survey would be conducted by a college professor or student who is independent of the judicial system. There would be no audio or video recording of the interview. No information would be released unless the person were endanger of hurting oneself or another person. If support was requested, the interviewee would be referred to services not affiliated with the judicial system in any way. Furthermore, the client would be given a \$25 gift

certificate to a local department store chain that did not sell alcohol, tobacco, firearms, or ammunition as well as a signed consent form. (See Appendix B)

All questionnaires were completed during these face-to-face interviews. Since interviews were not taped. Therefore, all qualitative data was handwritten by the researcher and repeated to the interviewee for accuracy. The questionnaire began and ended with demographic and opinion-based questions prior to one's admission and after release from Drug Court. (See Appendix A)

One question was duplicated in the survey, "*Did you believe you would complete it (Drug Court), i.e. be a success?*" The question was asked at the beginning and the end of the survey. It was initially asked so researchers could gauge the client's beliefs about one's ability to lead a sober lifestyle prior to their admission to the program. It was repeated at the end of the interview so the former client would have heard the questions and their comments throughout the process. It would allow them to evaluate their success by telling their stories. After asking this question the first time, clients shared their thoughts about their Drug Court experience.

The next set of questions examined the impact Drug Court had on their lives. They were asked about their thoughts about the program prior to admission and recommendations for programmatic change. After which, the questionnaire holistically examined their lives post-graduation. The questions that were asked focused upon their efforts to maintain sobriety and the level of difficulty. Attending 12-Step and spirituality-based meetings is required by Drug Court panel members and probation officers; therefore, the graduates were asked if they continued attending Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, or other 12-step programs, and how often they attended. These were followed by questions about Drug Court's impact on their families, educational goals, work habits, community involvement, and the development of new hobbies.

Clients discussed the move from their former drug-using subculture to mainstream society. They often compared success and struggles in their current lives to those of the past, always using a committed date that acts as a turning point in their lives. This qualitative information offered further insight into their alcohol and drug abuse, subculture involvement, and the impact Drug Court had on their transition into the mainstream.

The initial goal was to interview 25 percent of the graduate population. However, eight percent agreed to the personal interviews. There were several factors that were considered to interview the clients about their lives since drug court. This severely limits generalizability and statistical significance. yet the qualitative and descriptive data cannot be ignored. The study provides insight into the long-term progress of Drug Court graduates.

Most clients live in the Woodbury County area or remain in constant contact with family and friends who live in the area. The researchers did not initially anticipate many difficulties in reaching them. They were mailed letters to their last known address and many clients phoned the researcher and their former probation officers. At first, the clients appeared to be searching for legitimacy. Graduates contacted their former probation officers and the researchers about the project. The information was repeated and reinforced by all involved persons. However, the clients were unwilling to participate. When asked their reasons for nonparticipation, most indicated it was part of their past. Others claimed trust issues with the judicial system. It seems they had been involved with the courts for much of their lives and were no longer on probation. They did not want to recall anything about their substance-abusing years and their involvement with the courts. Others mentioned fear of and anger toward any form of authority or organization. After four or five interviews occurred, numerous persons contacted the university researcher or their former probation officers requesting an interview. Interviews were scheduled and the other participants agreed to be interviewed. However, there were some former clients who did not show for the interview after scheduling. They were contacted for rescheduling; in most cases, the interviewee did not return telephone calls. It seemed as if an informal network existed among former graduates that centers on those who attend 12-step meetings and their family involvement was of no consequence. Once it learned the legitimacy of the project from other recovering persons, they were more willing to participate.

This is the major limitation of the research project. While the number of clients interviewed does not allow for statistical significance, the paper does provide descriptive and qualitative data into their lives. Since many of the interviewees are members of 12-step programs, most clients reported they had maintained sobriety after graduation. Caucasians were far more likely to participate in the follow-up interviews than other racial groups. This may be caused a traditional lack of trust that exists among racial minority groups and law enforcement. Unfortunately, the study does not provide much insight into those persons who were not successful at maintaining a drug- or alcohol-free lifestyle. While it seems most clients are working-class citizens who are self-sufficient, one-third of the clientele reported chronic physical and/or mental health conditions that primarily occurred post-graduation. This study cannot determine if their health care is provided through private insurance and public assistance. Even with these limitations, the descriptive and qualitative analyses provides insight into the lives of Drug Court graduates up to five years post-release. It will serve as an basis for future research among this group.

Findings

Demographics at Admission

While 90 percent of the respondents were Caucasian, they were equally divided by gender. Forty-seven percent were male with the remaining 53 percent being female. Clients' average age was approximately 25 years. Over 37 percent had completed high school or some advanced degree prior to entering Drug Court; however, the average educational level was approximately 11th grade.

Most were unmarried or divorced. Over 66 percent lived with another person, usually a middle-aged male. If two persons lived in the household, the second person was likely to be a middle-aged female. By in large, these persons were either spouses or parents.

If the former clients had offspring, the former clients had one child at the time he or she was assigned to Drug Court. The children were most likely to be male and under age three. While some older graduates had adult children, only 13 percent of those with underage children reported having legal custody. Even though most were single, they did not live in single-person households.

While many reported living with another person, all of the respondents reported living independently in an apartment or house. They earned \$25K annually. Fifteen percent reported some financial assistance from some governmental agency; however, most were gainfully employed in various areas like telemarketing, food service, construction, etc. or were full-time college students.

Nearly all respondents claimed initial confidence about completing Drug Court. Eighty percent listed *"improved self-esteem"* as the primary or secondary reason the program helped improve the quality of their lives. Meanwhile, 40 percent stated it encouraged them to seek advanced educational opportunities. Furthermore, they claimed it taught them to *"stay clean"*. One former client answered the question clearly when he/she said, *"It did something."* While they stated their confidence in completing the program, their collective expectations of the program varied. At times, this confidence was contradicted by their later responses.

Initially, clients reported opposing views about Drug Court. These responses ranged from hesitation to unrealistic expectations about the program or their future. One client reported,

Didn't think it would (work). There was no help. (PO) tried to get me into a treatment center but they had a waiting list about six months long. It took that long for me to get into treatment but (PO) hung in there with me. I think (PO) knew that I was also in pain. Dope helped me deal with the pain (before coming to Drug Court).

Others viewed it as a *"get-out-of-jail-free card"* or *"another legal requirement"*.

"If you did what they told you to do, they would get off your back."

Meanwhile others claimed “*their friends had been through it and hated it*” or they “*expected them to keep me clean and sober.*”

When asked, “*What did you like about Drug Court?*”, a large majority reported favorable responses. Over 30 percent said having a panel member who is recovering from alcoholism and/or drug addiction was necessary for them. An additional 20 percent considered the panel’s support and guidance as key to their overall success. They were “*caring but strict*”. Additional comments are:

People were nice and pleasant. They did not scold me and it wasn’t stressful coming to it.

I got positive reinforcement repeatedly from my parents, my probation officer, my teachers, and drug court. Seeing that so many people cared about me made me want to change.

The panel was cool. The panel challenged me intellectually and they gave me a million chances. The judges kept me out of trouble. I was a punk and drug court was against my viewpoint at the time.

The panel cared about what happened to me.

I had pressure to get things done.

I always knew that I would get a UA and that I would pass it. It kept me clean and gave me something to look forward to.

That is was quick. I was able to get through it without much problem.

It’s a good program. If you go in with an open mind and follow suggestions, it’s awesome. It’s a good part of the judicial system. I loved my panel. They gave me good advice. I screwed up and (a community panel member) went to bat for me. He/She even came down to support me when I saw the judge. Meth is hard to get off of. Once you’re off of it, your life is a complete turnaround.

There are so many things. The best thing is that people need to know is that if you fall down, doesn’t mean you can’t get up. I can care for others. Things weren’t as bad as it seemed. I felt like I was given the royal treatment. I didn’t want to leave. There was safety there. When they told me it was time to graduate, I asked them to let me stay. I didn’t want to graduate because it was safe and I didn’t know if I would go out and use again. I didn’t want to graduate. They were so caring. They let me come back and talk to them after I graduated. Because of them I started (a 12-Step meeting that supports recovering persons). It’s an (12-Step) meeting that we have on (X) nights up at(X). The room is packed with young people and we give them (a 12-step) chip that we make for them. People tell me that I don’t look like an addict but I am. Lots of people get sober and stay sober because of that meeting and they get to see people who don’t look like addicts get their chip.

Having to answer to someone. They made me care about me. Most think addicts get what they deserve.

The reprimands helped because when I thought about using again, they were firm with me with what would happen if I did not but were very supportive of me if I did.

Even though the graduates complimented the program, they were equally critical of it. Some complaints appear to be legitimate while others stem from their experiences. For example, graduates self-reported problems with authority figures. Clients vented frustrations with the program; however, most of these responses appeared to be self-centered because the panel members would not allow the clients to act as if they were part of a drug-using subculture. Since this is often the only way a client may know to respond, he or she appeared to resist the panel's demands. The graduates reported the expectations placed upon them were too strict and unyielding at times. Another complaint came from younger participants. The younger the client, the less comfortable the person was to discuss their situations. They believed the panel members didn't understand the pressures teenagers and young adults live with today. This may have merit as many panel members are three to five times the client's age.

The panels got in my way. I didn't look forward to them at all. I didn't feel comfortable speaking in front of them. I couldn't express my opinions with my mom there. No kid takes him mom to a job interview and they want me to tell them things that I don't want my mom to know I did (parents are often in the room with their children).

They throw a label on you for being a bad kid. Rehab tries to modify it.

It kept me from making money.

I had an attitude. I was young. Once they got to an understanding that I was young, we got along much better.

At times the panel members were difficult and demanding. They made me cry and made me mad. I was always doing something wrong. I wasn't working enough hours. I wasn't going to enough meetings. If I forgot to write something down, I got in trouble. They were just mean sometimes.

They made me get out and apply for jobs when jobs weren't there. The court didn't seem to understand my situation. The panelists were too old and they didn't understand anything about my life. I live out (of Sioux City's city limits) and it takes me X minutes to get to Sioux City. They kept telling me to go to mall to get a job. I didn't have a driver's license and nobody had the time to drive me into town to work a part-time job. There ain't no jobs out where I live and they couldn't understand it. They kept telling me to look for jobs at the mall or a fast-food place. They just couldn't understand my situation.

Constantly telling me what to do, like going to two (AA) meetings a week. Then they would tell me to go to different ones. I had two or three groups that I always attended and they fit within my work schedule. All of the others conflicted with my work schedule and they just didn't seem to understand that I couldn't do anything different without conflicting with work, school, treatment appointments, etc.

Being taped. I thought they were trying to catch me or something. It kept me honest but I didn't like it. I never understood why they did it.

I didn't like them snooping in my life. They were violating my civil rights I thought. Sometimes they ran way over schedule and I thought they didn't respect me enough to keep a time schedule. Otherwise they were heroes and volunteering their time.

I was going to the same two meetings a week and they didn't like it. They were the only ones I could make and fit into my schedule but they thought I needed to attend more and I didn't like it.

The reprimands helped but pissed me off and I left mad a lot. They did help a lot. I didn't like it when I need a drug for a legitimate reason and that I didn't need them. They were concerned I would use them in the wrong way.

Drug Court makes conscience efforts to implement the TJ and social bonds theory within the program.

However, it seems the clients do not understand that persons living in mainstream society obtain and maintain steady employment, pursue educational opportunities, etc. and avoid personal responsibilities.

Clients are often referred to 12-step meetings and encouraged to attend numerous ones until they find ones that are comfortable. The theoretical underpinnings and courts' attempt to implement positive change in a client's life may not be fully understood by the client or they may be more self-focused or centered which prevents them from understanding the court's choices.

This question was followed with "What do you think Drug Court taught you?" They responded by using words or phrases such as self-respect, responsibility, treatment, clean and sober, situations, and actions.

It taught me self-respect. Respect for others. Responsibility. It taught me to be a mature adult.

My self-esteem increased. I felt better about myself and that I was worth something. I felt special. It sounds cheesy but true.

I went through stuff like treatment and meeting people with addiction. I learned it wasn't worth all of the stuff I was doing. It wasn't worth the trouble and rebelling. There is not a happy time when I am using. After quitting, it wasn't easy. I was depressed. I had to deal with day-to-day things. Quitting helped me do that (deal with day-to-day things). Who I was and who I am are two different people. Dealing with addictions hasn't been easier. I feel pathetic for who I was. But I feel better about myself. I'm happier about how I am. I've learned about my problems with addiction from drug court. It raised my awareness. I will live with this for the rest of my life and it's keeping me from thinking about drugs. It keeps me from the "street thinking" about drugs and I learned more about drugs clinically. Drug court is good for kids. I have a great relationship with my probation officer. He(she) taught me about living life without drugs. I look up to him(her) because of the problems they faced in their own lives and they lived through it.

It made me read the books and I had to write notes. I had to report these things back to my panel.

Drug Court should have more people on it who've been in the same type of situations that I've been in.

It taught me responsibility for my own actions. It was not a serious problem but if I continued I saw what was going to happen. It helped me turn my life around.

It taught me how to live life. It's not a game. Everything's connected and it has a spiderweb effect.

They helped me prioritize my life, jobs, school, what's important in life. They helped me get my priorities straight and what gave me confidence and self-esteem. I changed playmates and play grounds. It was like watching an ABC After-School Special.

How to live life sober.

It made me more mad. It forced me to do things that I didn't think was right. The punishments were too strict. You should allow persons to be who they are. You need to keep it real. They degraded me but they were brutally honest. They had to get through my head. You can't fool your drug court panelists. They're too smart. You just can't do it. It helped me to make better choices. I know what's right and what's wrong now. I don't like it but I do it anyway.

It taught me a little responsibility.

How to live. It wasn't drug court as much as treatment. It taught me how to deal with the past from growing up. Dealing with the past. I've been sober for the past two years and (a biological family member) has passed away. I did just the opposite. It gave me a reason to stay clean. He/She left for a reason and that was to get me sober.

They taught me I'm okay without the drugs for my self-esteem and hide from life.

It required me to go to a half-way house. I learned what family was about there. They taught me what normal was. I hadn't been part of a family for over 25 years. That's how long I had used.

It taught me to stay clean. I relapsed before drug court but not afterwards. It did something.

They showed me there are things to do sober. They taught me to be around sober people who become your friends.

It helped me to stay honest. I wouldn't be here today if it hadn't been for Drug Court.

All clients referred to a sobriety date, a day one considered to be the day one stopped drinking and drugging. Thirty-three percent reported continuous sobriety since release, maintaining a minimum of 30 months "clean time". There was no evidence of criminal activity beyond their release date and all remained in the Woodbury County area after graduation. The following statistics describes the outcome of those who maintained continuous sobriety.

Lifestyle of Continuously Successful Graduates

Of these, 60 percent had maintained sobriety by attending 12-step meetings following release. Forty-four percent attended at least one meeting weekly. It seems their attendance at 12-step meetings had a greater impact on their success than the amount of "clean time" a person had amassed since his or her Drug Court release. Those persons who continued participating in 12-step meetings reported less difficulties obtaining and maintaining sobriety following Drug Court graduation than those who did not attend or have emotional support. In short, continuous 12-

step involvement or actively participating in spiritually-based organizations was key to a Drug Court graduate's comprehensive success.

Sixty percent of the graduates reported Drug Court helped them obtain and maintain steady employment and less likely to change jobs since release. Most claimed they were "*better employees or supervisors*". They did not think support after Drug Court graduation impacted employment stability or work habits. This is not surprising as most were employed full-time when sentenced to Drug Court. Yet, those persons who completed Drug Court and attended 12-step meetings following their release were less likely to change jobs and reported greater job satisfaction. One client said,

I went back to work with (people) I had worked with before. Now, I'm the (person in charge). I was offered the pay for it a long time (before I took it). I went with (my supervisor) to an (out-of-town) conference and stayed sober.

It also helped them become better high school or college students. Former clients stated:

I focused on education. I wasn't accepted (anywhere) and turned to alcohol and drugs. Having someone to answer to helped me. But the choice was mine to make (to use or not use drugs).

I had to tell the Court what I was doing before and now. I was praised for doing good stuff when everyone said that's what you are supposed to do. I wonder what I would have done otherwise. I finished school with my class after having two (children), doing Drug Court, and getting off (probation).

It broadened my views. Nothing is black and white. I work more in the gray. It gave me a sense of pride. It kept me out of trouble. They taught me to read books, do community service, and kiss a lot of ass.

I'm not working now so I can go to school full time and take care of my kids. I'm working toward a Ph.D. in Psychology (because of his/her experience in Drug Court and the psychology of the addicted mind).

(Drug Court helped me with) Going to school and starting a youth group.

(I started classes in) Auto-restoring. . . I've been more involved with school activities.

It (Drug Court) did help me complete high school and do it within three years.

Over half of the respondents claimed their participation in Drug Court improved familial relationships and helped reunite them. When asked, "*How had your participation in Drug Court affected those persons in your life?*", clients responded:

My parents are happy to have help.

It helped me be a good father to my (children). . . People thought I was always going to do wrong but I am proving them wrong. My family is proud of me.

My parents talk about me more positively.

My mom was grateful that I was in Drug Court. She was at her wit's end with me. Drug Court helped her get control.

My mom is happier and more proud of me. My brothers and sisters have someone to look up to. It made me a better person.

I turned positive later. I started negative because I shocked them for getting into trouble. They never realized how much trouble I was in until I went to Drug Court. They didn't understand anything about addiction or that I had a problem. As I went through Drug Court, I improved and they learned more about me and addiction. It worked out best for everyone.

My (sibling) was a proud (person) and was always jovial. He/She was a big jokester. He/She helped take care of me. He's/She's dead now and my (brother or sister) in-law has taken it upon him/herself to come by and see me. . . You have to want it (Drug Court). Nobody can help you if you don't want it. I am trying to get my (children) into treatment (and they can see me as an example of someone who got sober).

They see a more positive person.

Graduates were more likely to develop new hobbies or become more involved in community activities.

Not only were graduates were more likely to be involved with their families but they also are more likely to become involved with hobbies and their communities. If they are involved with 12-step programs, clients are more likely to be involved with such activities. Former clients responded when asked the question, “*Since leaving Drug Court, have you started new hobbies or gotten involved in any school activities?*” they listed activities such as fishing, church-related activities, and joining motivational or public speaking organizations. Some started new 12-step meetings that cater to teenagers. They use groups like these to develop new friendships that encourage lifestyle changes, set goals, and build support. Quotes from former clients include the following:

Sweat lodges. I got involved with (a local youth organization) and my X-year-old son's life. I'm accountable to them. . . I can be a (parent) and I couldn't have done anything like that before.

. . . remaining physically active. Going to a men's retreat and becoming a warrior. They taught me how to trust again by blindfolding me and carrying me through the woods where I didn't know where I was and had to depend upon someone to care for me. It was hard at first but it was the best thing I could have done.

If they grew ill, the former graduates were more likely to seek medical care when they were ill. In some cases, increased concern for one's health may have saved the person's life. About one-third of those who maintained sobriety had serious health concerns and required continuous medication. The most common were varying forms of cancer and Type II diabetes. Two factors may cause concern.

Those who were diagnosed with cancer tended to report methamphetamine abuse. They were usually diagnosed within two years to 2.5 years after their Drug Court release.

Lifestyle of Lesser-Successful Graduates

The remaining 66 percent stated they had used mood-altering substances since their release. Of these remaining graduates, 20 percent had one to two years of sobriety. The remaining 47 percent had less than 12 months. Most reported their behavior to be the result of a “*one-nighter*” that occurred soon after release. They were less likely to see themselves as a success than their counterparts who maintained sobriety beyond their Drug Court release. Based upon qualitative data collected during their interviews, it seemed as if they were rebelling against their judicial involvement and celebrating their release from it. Others thought they could handle drugs and alcohol after “*being clean and sober*” while being in Drug Court for over a year. Upon realizing they could no longer live in that subculture, the clients returned to a more mainstream lifestyle. They returned to a living a sober lifestyle but appeared to avoid 12-step or spiritually-based organizations.

This group was less likely to attend 12-step or report participating in spirituality-based support groups than those who had longer periods of sobriety. They reported their families were less supportive of them than those who attended support groups or aftercare. One client stated,

My family looks at me like I'm a bad seed. They think I'm a bad influence because I got caught.

They were more likely to change jobs than those who completed Drug Court and remained involved in 12-step programs and/or community organizations. Drug Court had a lesser impact on improving the client's work habits than the group of graduates who maintained sobriety. Graduates who “slipped” were less likely to seek medical attention and reported fewer chronic illnesses. However, their cancer rates almost equaled those who maintained sobriety beyond their Drug Court release. Their illnesses developed about six months to one year earlier than those who attended 12-step programs or other support groups post-graduation. They were more likely to require invasive action like surgery than their counterparts. Required continuous access to prescription medications for his/her chronic illness but less willing to continue follow-up care or take prescribed medications. However, none of them committed crime while under the influence.

Opinions of Judges

Overall, the clients' opinions of the panel judges ranged across the spectrum. However, there were three judges who were consistently mentioned for impacting their lives. While their approach may have been viewed negatively in the beginning, the graduates reported their impact changed their lives.

Sister Grace Ann Witte was mentioned frequently, particularly among female graduates. They commented upon her calm, “no-nonsense” but very compassionate approach helped them to understand their problems. Sister Grace appeared in court with them to show support. They credited her tough but compassionate support as one of the reasons they remained clean and sober.

Two other persons who serve on the same panel were consistently mentioned, JoAnne Owens and Bert Welch. Owens was sometimes referred to as “the Notebook Nazi”. She requires all clients to maintain a daily to weekly schedule and document all information. She expects them to present all required information monthly and she penalizes them for not bringing with them to court. While the clients were angered by her demands while in Drug Court, they reported to appreciate her efforts after graduation. She had taught them to schedule their lives and set realistic, daily goals. Welch was mentioned for his work with those who suffer from physical disabilities. A retired therapist and quadriplegic, his presence and approach teaches them they are not hindered by disability.

Conclusion

Like many other American drug courts, Woodbury County, Iowa’s program theoretically bases itself on therapeutic jurisprudence and social bonds theory. It receives both federal and state dollars and is transitioning toward a state-funded program. Except for its post-plea and community-based approaches, its mission, goals, and admission requirements are similar to others around the nation.

The community-based approach used by the Woodbury County Drug Court Program is unique among its counterparts throughout the United States. Supported by federal and state funds, the program appears to be successful in deterring its clients from the alcohol- and drug-using subculture. Interviewing clients who had completed the program up to five years post graduation, this research project examined the lives of 15 graduates of the local Drug Court program and the impact it made on their lives. Approximately one-third of them maintained sobriety since graduation. The chances of maintaining their sobriety and becoming more involved with mainstream society increased with their continued involvement in 12-step programs. If the client “slipped” into previous behaviors, one was more likely to return to sober living. While not statistically significant, this paper provides qualitative insight into the lives of graduates two years beyond their release date. While there were several complaints about the program mentioned by the former clients, the Woodbury County Drug Court Program appears to be successful.

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Appendix A

Adult Initial Survey Instrument Script

_____ **Subject Number**

Must be prior drug court participants

Hi, I am Dr. Dwight Vick. I am a political science professor at the University of South Dakota. I am studying the success rate of the Woodbury County Drug Court program. I have asked you to participate in this survey because you fit that criterion.

Now I am going to discuss with you the informed consent document. This document covers various issues and questions you may have about this research project. We will be asking you questions such as: age, education, as well as your employment and relationship status. We will ask you about your thoughts and opinions about Drug Court and how it did or did not have an impact on your life after graduation. You will also be asked questions about your support structure after graduation. If at any time you do not understand anything or have any questions, please let me know.

First, I am the primary investigator in this study. If you ever need to reach me, please contact me, at 605.677.5763.

Now under the statement of research, it reads, it is a basic ethical principle that a subject, such as yourself, who is participating in the research must give his or her informed consent to such participation. This consent must be based on the understanding of the nature and risks of the research. This document provides information important to this understanding.

The purpose of this study is to examine possible factors that may or may not have led to an achievable success rate among juveniles who participated in the Woodbury County Drug Court Program and who are now adults.

Approximately forty-one (25) adults who graduated from Drug Court within the last five years will take part and complete this study in Woodbury County, Iowa.

Your participation in the study will last approximately forty-five minutes to one hour.

This study will consist of an interview process in which you will be asked to provide demographic information about yourself. You are free to skip any questions you prefer not to answer. The interview will be recorded onto an audio cassette for the sole reason of data accuracy. If you desire the interview to not be recorded, your request will be honored; therefore, your responses will only be recorded on paper. To protect your confidentiality, please do not use your last name if your interview is being tape recorded. I would even strongly recommend you not use your first name. A pseudonym would be a good alternative. You may choose not to answer any question if you would prefer. The interviewer will not write your name or use any identifying information that will link you to any other document or person associated with or employed by the Woodbury County Drug Court Program.

Your responses will be kept confidential. Your interview, whether on tape, paper, or both, will be kept private and locked at the University of South Dakota and in an area that only the principle investigator and advisor have access to. Further, the interview documentation (including the recorded interviews) will not contain your name, case number, or any other identifying symbol that would allow anyone (other than the principle investigator and advisor) to know that you are involved in this research study.

To help us further protect your privacy, the investigators have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). With this Certificate, the investigators cannot be forced to disclose research information that may identify you in any Federal, State, or local civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceedings. Disclosure will be necessary, however, upon request of DHHS for audit or program evaluation purposes. You should understand that a Certificate of Confidentiality does not prevent you or a member of your family from voluntarily releasing information about yourself or your involvement in this research. Note however, that if an insurer or employer learns about your participation, and obtains your consent from you to receive research information, then the investigator may not use the Certificate of Confidentiality to withhold this information. This means that you and your family must also actively protect your own privacy. Finally, you should understand that the investigator is not prevented from taking steps, including reporting to authorities, to prevent serious harm to yourself or others.

All risk and personal discomforts associated with this study have been minimized as much as possible to person, your anonymity, and your psychological health. It is the research project director's responsibility to minimize the risks associated with the research and to explain to you what those risks are. The research team has made every attempt possible to safeguard your privacy and safety while gathering information about the project. Please make sure you understand any risks or discomforts associated with the research before you decide to participate. There may be some risks from participating in the study.

First, you may experience frustration or boredom that is often reported when completing surveys. Also, the questions may force you to reflect upon a difficult time in your life, and you may experience an assortment of emotions relating to your experiences. If you become upset by any of the questions, you may stop the interview at any time. If you would like to talk with someone regarding substance use, please contact the Addiction Information Center, 24 hours a day, at 1.800.784.6776. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of South Dakota Research Compliance Office at 605.677.6184. Once the data are collected and the information is published, participants will have access to the publication upon request.

You may not benefit personally from participating in the study. However, we hope that in the future other people might benefit from this study. It will allow Drug Court professionals world wide to evaluate the results and compare with their programs. Specifically, Woodbury County Drug Court will be able to use the results to improve and strengthen their Drug Court program.

The only cost you will have with this study is your transportation to the facility where the interview will be held. Your interview will be held at a time that does not conflict with your work schedule.

You will be compensated for your time with a \$20 gift certificate.

The study is being funded by Woodbury County Court Services. Neither the researchers nor the Woodbury County Drug Court Program are financially profiting from this research project.

Information obtained in this study will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, you will not be identified. We will describe the results in a summarized manner. Information that is obtained in connection with this study will not be able to be personally linked to you. Your data will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of storing data in locked file cabinets, within locked offices, only accessible by the principle investigator and advisor.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate, or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Your choice to not participate will not affect you in any way.

Lastly, there is a list of contact information if you need to contact anyone in regards to the study.

Do you have any questions?

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Ok, now we will begin the survey. Do I have your consent to record the interview? (If yes, I will start the tape and again confirm on tape that I have the participant's consent to record the interview. If not, I will records everything on paper.)

First we will just start out with some basic demographic information.

Primary Data Collection Survey

_____ **Current Age**

Gender

_____ **Male (1)**
_____ **Female (2)**
_____ **No Answer (99)**

Race

_____ **Asian (1)**
_____ **African American (2)**
_____ **Caucasian (3)**
_____ **American Indian/Native American (4)**
_____ **Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (5)**
_____ **Hispanic/Latino (6)**
_____ **Other (7)** _____

Highest Grade Completed prior to admission to drug court:

_____ **Write highest grade completed (1-12)**
_____ **No Answer (99)**

Relationship status at this time:

_____ **Married (1)**
_____ **Divorced (2)**
_____ **Separated (3)**
_____ **Never married (4)**
_____ **Widowed (5)**
_____ **Boyfriend/Girlfriend (6)**
_____ **Unknown (7)**
_____ **Other (8)** _____
_____ **No Answer (99)**

Do you have any children?

Children	Gender	Age	Live with client while in drug court
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Other than your parents, siblings, or your children, do you have anyone else living with you now that you have completed drug court?

Gender	Age	Live with client after drug court
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What is your estimated total, annual family income after completing drug court?

_____ \$0 to 4999	(1)
_____ \$5000 to \$9999	(2)
_____ \$10,000 to \$14,999	(3)
_____ \$15,000 to \$19,999	(4)
_____ \$20,000 to \$24,999	(5)
_____ \$25,000 to \$29,999	(6)
_____ \$30,000 to \$34,999	(7)
_____ \$35,000 to \$39,999	(8)
_____ \$40,000 and up	(9)

Upon completion of drug court, what type of housing did you have?

_____ Own house, apartment, room	(1)
_____ Lived with parent(s) or guardian(s)	(2)
_____ Lived with others (no rent)	(3)
_____ Lived in halfway house	(4)
_____ Lived in homeless shelter	(5)
_____ Homeless	(6)
_____ Other	(7)

What has been your primary occupation since completing drug court?

What is the highest grade you have completed since completing drug court:

_____ Write highest grade completed (1-12)
_____ Some college/trade school (13-16)
_____ No Answer (99)

Before entering the Drug Court program, did you believe you would complete it, i.e. be a success story?

_____ Yes (1)
_____ No (2)
_____ Unknown/no answer (3)

What were your expectations before coming to Drug Court? (check all that apply)

☐ Another legal requirement, i.e. “do it to get them off my back” (1)

☐ Did not know what to expect (2)

☐ Thought I could get away with old behaviors without being caught (3)

☐ Other _____

What did you like about Drug Court? (check all that apply)

☐ Having someone who was familiar with addiction to hear my concerns (1)

☐ Having someone provide me guidance on how to “live life” without drugs or alcohol (2)

☐ Receiving support from community panelists (3)

☐ Receiving reprimands from community panelists (4)

☐ Reporting to other groups besides my home panel (5)

☐ Seeing my parole officer (6)

☐ Working with panelists and not a judge (7)

☐ Other _____

Overall, what do you think Drug Court taught you?

NOTE TO RESEARCHER: Look for the following terms in their response: responsibility, sobriety, independence, structure, confidence, etc.

How did Drug Court help improve the quality of your life? (Check all that apply)

☐ Educational advancement beyond previous level (i.e., GED, technical, and/or college)

☐ Improved self-esteem

☐ Long-term employment

☐ Other: _____

In your own words, tell me how Drug Court changed how you feel about yourself?

What did you NOT like about Drug Court (check all that apply)

- ☐ Having someone who was familiar with addiction to hear my concerns (1)
- ☐ Having someone provide me guidance on how to ~~live~~ live without drugs or alcohol (2)
- ☐ Receiving support from community members (3)
- ☐ Receiving reprimands from community members (4)
- ☐ Reporting to other groups besides my home panel (5)
- ☐ Seeing my parole officer (6)
- ☐ Working with panelists and not a judge (7)
- ☐ Other _____

What would you change about Drug Court?

Since leaving Drug Court, what methods have you used to maintain your sobriety?

On a scale from 1 to 10, how difficult have these challenges been for you in maintaining your sobriety?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

When participating in Drug Court, clients are often required to document their attendance at 12-step meetings like AA, NA, CA, Alanon, Alateen, etc. or spend time with persons who focus on spirituality, etc. Since graduation, have you continued attending 12-Step meetings or spend time with persons who focus on their spiritual growth?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ Unknown/no answer (99)

How often do you attend these meetings?

- ☐ more than 3 times per week (1)
- ☐ between 1 and 2 times per week (2)
- ☐ one meeting each week (3)
- ☐ about two meetings each month (4)
- ☐ about once each month (5)
- ☐ when I think I am about to drink or drug (6)
- ☐ talk with friends who are recovering often so I don't attend meetings (7)
- ☐ never attend 12-step meetings (8)
- ☐ Unknown/no answer (9)

How has your participation in Drug Court affected those persons in your life (spouse, children, relatives, other adults living in the household)?

_____ Positively (1)

_____ No impact (2)

_____ Negatively (3)

Explain _____

On a scale from 1 to 10, how strongly has your family supported you since leaving drug court?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Employment status since completing drug court (Check all that apply)

_____ Full time (40 or more hours) (1)

_____ Half-time (20 to 39 hours) (2)

_____ Part-time (less than 19) (3)

_____ Full-time student (4)

_____ Other (5)

No. of jobs held since completing drug court? _____

By maintaining sobriety, were you better able to obtain and maintain employment BECAUSE of your participation in Drug Court?

_____ Positively (1)

_____ No impact (2)

_____ Negatively (3)

Explain _____

On a scale from 1 to 10, how much have your work habits improved since entering Drug Court?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Since leaving drug court, have you started new hobbies or gotten involved in any school activities?

_____ Yes (1)

 List them _____

_____ No (2)

_____ Unknown/No Answer (9)

How long have you pursued this hobby/activity? _____ (years/months)

After leaving drug court, have you been seen at a psychiatric or mental health clinic, or gone to a doctor, social worker, or clergy for an emotional problem?

☐ **Yes (1)**

☐ **No (2)**

☐ **Unknown/No Answer (99)**

Following release from drug court, did you ever seek medical assistance for a non-alcohol or drug-related concern?

☐ **Yes (1)**

☐ **No (2)**

☐ **Unknown/No Answer (99)**

Since leaving drug court, have you had any serious illness, hospitalization, or surgery?

☐ **Yes (complete information below) (1)**

_____ No (2)

_____ Unknown/No Answer (99)

Illness	Required medication	Continue medication	Required Hospitalization	Required Surgery	Date	Follow-up care

Are you currently taking ANY medications (including birth control) or take any over-the-counter medications (vitamins, aspirin, diet pills, pain medication, etc.) by prescription or otherwise? Indicate the name of each drug, dosage, frequency, purpose, and whether it was taken according to prescription.

Medication	Dosage	Frequency	Purpose	Rx?

Going into the program did you believe you were going to be a “success”?

_____ Yes (1)

_____ No (2)

Are you a “success”?

_____ Yes (1)

_____ No (2)

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to this study. Do you currently have any questions? Here is an informed consent form with all relevant information regarding this study that we discussed before the interview. My number is on this form as well as several other contact numbers in case you have any questions or concerns in the future. Here is your gift certificate. Again, thank-you for your participation.

Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT
The University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD 57069

TITLE: *Five-year Follow-up Study of Adult Drug Court, Sioux City, Iowa*

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: *Dwight Vick, Ph.D.*

ADVISOR:

DEPARTMENT: *Political Science*

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH:

It is a basic principle that a subject who is participating in the research must give his or her informed consent to such participation. Your consent is based on your understanding of the nature of the study and the risks of the study. This document provides information regarding the nature and risks of the study. **Please read the document carefully. If you have any questions, please ask the researcher to explain it to you.**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The overall goal of this study is to determine the long-term success rate of adult participants in the Woodbury County Drug Court Program. You have been asked to participate in a research study because you have graduated from the Woodbury County Drug Court within the last five years and are now an adult.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

Approximately 41 participants were randomly selected and contacted by the research group. The selection criteria are: 1) adults who participated in and graduated from Drug Court within the past five years; 2) participants who are now 18-years-old or older.

WHAT KINDS OF QUESTIONS WILL YOU ASK ME?

Dr. Vick or his research assistant will begin the interview, if you agree to participate, by asking demographic questions. These questions include subjects like: gender, race, education, and income. We will ask you questions about your quality of life AFTER completing drug court. These questions deal with situations like: income; occupation; educational advancement; community participation; where you lived AFTER completing drug court; your views about Drug Court AFTER your graduation; what you DID like and DID NOT like about Drug Court; and what you would CHANGE about Drug Court.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THE STUDY?

Your participation in the study will last approximately forty-five (45) minutes to one (1) hour.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE STUDY?

This study will consist of an interview process in which you will be asked to provide personal information about yourself. You will be asked questions regarding your views

on Drug Court, your experiences after Drug Court, your support structure, and medical history.

The session will last about forty-five (45) minutes to one (1) hour. It will take place in an interview room located at the Trosper-Hoyt Building at 822 Douglas Street or the Woodbury County Courthouse on the corner of 6th and Douglas in Sioux City, Iowa. Only the interviewer and you will be the only people in the room. The interview will be recorded onto a paper survey and audio cassette for the sole reason of data accuracy. If you do not want the interview to be recorded, the researcher will not record the interview. However, the interviewer will write the response you provide to each question on the survey form.

If you allow the researcher to tape the interview, please do not use your name at any time while the tape is recording. To protect your confidentiality, please do not use your last name if your interview is being tape recorded. An alias or a false name would be a good alternative, or just make it a point to not use a name at all. You may choose not to answer any question if you do not want to.

We will also collect information from your records at the Woodbury Drug Court. If your records are sealed per your request, the researchers will NOT have access to them at ANY time. Your name, court file number, or any other identifying information will NOT be recorded on any data collection form. Information that will be collected will include gender, age, highest grade completed in school, where treatment was received, and the citations and charges against you. The only information available to or recorded by the researchers that could link your information is respondent's name that is recorded along side the file number assigned by the research team. This link will be kept separate from the information collected and stored in an unmarked file cabinet at the University of South Dakota campus. This information is unavailable to any law enforcement official.

WILL MY RESPONSES REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL?

To help us further protect your privacy, the investigators have obtained a Confidentiality Certificate from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and HIPPA agreement. With these certificates, the investigators cannot be forced to release research information that may identify you in any Federal, State, or local civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceedings. Finally, you should understand that the investigator is not prevented from taking steps, including reporting to authorities, to prevent serious harm to yourself, to others, or if you report the endangerment of a child.

All information the researchers obtain will be kept private and locked in an area at the University of South Dakota that only the principle investigator and advisor have access to. Furthermore, the interview information will not contain your name, court case number, file number, or any other identifying symbol that would allow anyone (other than the principle investigator and advisor) to know that you are involved in this research study. Dr. Vick and the research assistant will do whatever necessary keep this information confidential, but you do need to be aware of the minimal risk.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS OF THE STUDY?

All risk and personal discomforts associated with this study have been minimized as much as possible to your person, your anonymity (to keep you anonymous), and your psychological health.

There may be some risks from participating in the study. First, you may experience frustration or boredom that is often reported when answering questions. Also, the questions may force you to reflect upon a difficult time in your life, and you may experience an assortment of emotions relating to your experiences. If you become upset by any of the questions, you may stop the interview at any time. If you would like to talk with someone regarding substance use, please contact the Addiction Information Center, 24 hours a day, at 1.800.784.6776.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of South Dakota Research Compliance Office at 605.677.6184.

Once the data are collected and the information is published, you will have access to the publication upon request.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You will receive a \$20 gift certificate for participating. Woodbury County Drug Court will be able to use the results to improve and strengthen their Drug Court program. Furthermore, you will have the satisfaction of assisting student complete one's education as well as contribute to the academic body of knowledge surrounding Woodbury County and American drug courts. It will allow Drug Court professionals world wide to evaluate the results and compare them with their programs.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THE STUDY?

The only cost you will have with this study is your transportation to the facility where the interview will be held. Your interview will be held at a time that does not conflict with your work schedule.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will be given a \$25 gift certificate.

WHO IS FUNDING THE STUDY?

The study is being funded by Woodbury County Court Services. The Woodbury County Court Services is funding the gift certificates, and all administrative costs associated with the study. The researchers are not financially profiting from conducting the study.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information obtained in this study will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. You will not be identified in any published report. All results will be described in a summary; thus no one other than yourself and the researchers will know your contribution to the study.

We will be seeking information from the Woodbury County Drug Court about you from public court records. The information that you provide will be combined with all of the other persons who participate in the research project. No link will be made directly to you. Your data will remain confidential and will be disclosed only as required by law. To keep your information confidential we will store the data in locked file cabinets, within locked offices, only accessible by the principle investigator and advisor. Once the study

has been completed and met all University of South Dakota's Internal Review Board requirements for storing paper copies, the researchers will destroy any and all papers and tapes pertaining to the project. Even though the researchers are taking every precaution to prevent protect your anonymity and confidentiality, this will guarantee you that no one will ever be able to trace your participation in the project when it finishes. The results of this research will be shared Woodbury County Drug Court.

IS THE STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate, or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Your choice to not participate will not affect you in any way.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Dr. Dwight Vick at 605.677.5763.

If you would like to talk with someone regarding substance use, please contact the Addiction Information Center, 24 hours a day, at 1.800.784.6776.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of South Dakota, Institutional Review Board at 605.677.6184.

General information about being a research subject can be found by clicking
Information for Research Participants on the USD website:
<http://www.usd.edu/oorsch/compliance>.

SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subjects Name: _____

Signature of Subject

Date

I have discussed the above points with the subject or, where appropriate, with the subject's legally authorized representative. It is my opinion that the subject adequately understands the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in this study.

Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

Date

Appendix C

<Current Date>

<First Name> <Last Name>

<Street Address>

<City>, <State> <Zip Code>

Dear _____,

The Woodbury County Adult Drug Court Program is contacting persons who graduated from the program. We are asking them to participate in a follow-up study conducted and supervised by Dr. Dwight Vick, an assistant professor of political science at the University of South Dakota. Dr. Vick and his research staff have randomly selected persons to interview. You have been selected for this interview. They are hoping to contact 25 adults who graduated from the program over the past five years. If you choose to participate, you will be compensated with a \$25 gift certificate to a local business or restaurant.

The interview will last approximately forty-five (45) minutes to one (1) hour. You will be asked to provide demographic information about yourself, as well as your views on Drug Court, your life experiences after Drug Court, your support structure, and some medical history.

The interview will occur at the Woodbury County Correctional Services Office at 515 Water Street in Sioux City, Iowa. No one other than Dr. Vick, his research assistant, and you, will be present in the room at the time of the interview. The interviewer will record the information you provide on paper for the sole reason of data accuracy.

All responses will be kept completely confidential and all potential risks have been minimized to protect your anonymity. All access to the information that you provide will be strictly limited. Further, the interview documentation will not contain your name, case number, or any other identifying symbol that would allow anyone outside the study to know that you are involved in this research study. This study has also obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality and HIPAA waiver which further protects your privacy by not allowing the persons with access to your information to be forced to release your private information.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate, or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Your choice to not participate will not affect you in any way.

If you are interested in contributing to this study, please contact Dr. Vick and set up an interview. You can call him directly at (605)677-5763 or through the USD toll free number at 1.800.877.COYOTES to schedule a time for an interview that will be convenient for you. Please leave a message on his voice message system if he is not there. You can also contact him at that number if you have any questions.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Steve Middleton